

DORVAL;

OR, THE

TEST of VIRTUE.

A

C O M E D Y.

Translated from the FRENCH of

MONSIEUR DIDEROT.  *K*

Interdum, speciosa locis, morataque recte,
Fabula, nullius venenis, sine pondere & arte,
Valdius oblectat populum, meliusque moratur,
Quam versus inopes rerum, nugæque canoræ.

L O N D O N :

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MDCC LXVII.



AN INTRODUCTORY

P R E F A C E,

By the A U T H O R,

AFTER the publication of the sixth volume of the Encyclopædia, I retired into the country, to breathe health and repose; when an event, not less interesting from its uncommon circumstances, than from the merit of the persons concerned, became the conversation and admiration of the province. Nothing was talked of but the extraordinary man, who in the same day had the happiness to save his friend's life, and the resolution to sacrifice his love, freedom, and fortune.

Eager to know a character so exalted, I sought his acquaintance, and found him such as he was described, thoughtful and melancholy. Vexation and anguish, in resigning their empire over a soul they had been too long in possession of, marked his countenance with indelible traces. An air of sadness diffused itself over his deportment and conversation, unless Virtue was the theme of the latter. When his arguments enforced the transports she inspires in her votaries, then you would have thought him transformed into some superior being: serenity smoothed his brow, his eyes sparkled with mingled lustre and
a 2 sweetness,

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sweetness, and his voice became inexpressibly harmonious in the graceful eloquence of words peculiarly pathetic. A connection of moral truths with affecting images held the attention suspended, and the soul enraptured. Like the gloom of an autumn evening, when the sun, bursting through a sparkling cloud, is soon overshadowed by a lowering sky; so the transient gleam of gaiety vanished, almost instantaneously, and he again became immersed in silence and melancholy.

Such was Dorval. Whether he was prepossessioned in my favour by any of my friends, or whether, as some imagine, there is a secret attraction which impels us to love some persons at first sight, he accosted me with that openness of countenance which surprised all the company but myself, and encouraged me to think, the second time I saw him, that I might, without any impeachment of my discretion, enter upon his family affairs. He satisfied my curiosity by relating his story. I trembled with him at the trials to which the best men are sometimes exposed, and observed that a dramatic work on such a plan could not fail of making a strong impression on persons of sensibility and virtue, who were not quite unacquainted with human frailty.

Alas! replied he with a sigh, my father had the same thoughts. Some time after his arrival, when a sweet and tranquil joy began to succeed to our first transports, and made us relish the refined pleasure of each other's conversation, he spoke to me thus:

Dorval, every day that I address the Supreme Being for you and for Rosella, I offer up my

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thanks for preserving you both till my return, and more particularly for preserving you innocent. Ah my son! I never look at Rosella without trembling at the danger of your situation. The more I examine her, the more modest and beautiful she is, the more tremendous that danger appears. Let us reflect that Providence, whose watchful eye guards us from evil to-day, may leave us to our own wild direction to-morrow. An impenetrable veil conceals our destiny from us. All we know is, that as life advances in its course, we are farther removed from the temptations of vice. These reflections arise whenever I meditate on your story. They comfort the remaining ebb of life, and, with your approbation, will serve for the moral of a theatrical piece, of which some scenes in our past lives shall be the subject, and we will be ourselves the actors.

“A theatrical piece, Sir!” Yes my child. We want no other foundation for this structure but to snatch from oblivion the memory of an event in which we are warmly interested, and to relate it in a simple unadorned manner.—We will renew our former selves once a year in this house,—in this saloon! The words we have spoke shall be again repeated, and your children shall learn to teach them to their descendants. Thus I shall become the cotemporary of future ages! The companion of my grand-children!

Dost thou not think, Dorval, that a work that transmits our genuine sentiments, ideas, discourses—in one of the most important transactions of our lives, will be a far more valuable legacy to our posterity than family-portraits; which

which when most highly finished, only delineate the resemblance of our faces at some particular period of time?

“Your meaning is, Sir, that you injoin me
“to paint the features of your soul,—of my
“own,—those of Constance,—Clairville,—Ro-
“sella! Ah my father! I need not inform you
“this is a task superior to my abilities.”

Hear me, my son, I have a mind to perform my part once before I die, and for that purpose have desired Andrew to keep our prison-dresses till I have occasion for them.—“My father!

Hitherto my children never have opposed my inclination, or refused me any request. Surely they will not in this last instance?

Here Dorval, turning away his face to conceal his tears, said to me, in the accent of one who suppresses grief,—the piece is finished.—But he who commanded it is no more!—He added, after a moment's pause, I had laid the work aside, and thought little about it; but my family have so often repeated, what an affront it would be to my father's request any longer to neglect it, that I have at length been prevailed upon: And next week is the time fixed for acquitting ourselves of what they agree, with one consent, to consider as a duty. Dorval, said I, might I presume.”—“Tis unnecessary to explain yourself; but do you imagine that Constance, Clairville, or Rosella will think this a reasonable request? You know the subject, and will naturally suppose there are some scenes in the drama which the presence of a stranger would greatly embarrass. Yet,—the decorations of the saloon is my employment.—I will neither pro-
mise

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mise nor refuse——We shall see what I am able to do for you.

Dorval and I parted. This conversation was on the Monday,——He said not a word more all the week till Saturday morning, when he sent me a note.——“Precisely at three this afternoon “be at the garden gate.” I was punctual, was admitted through the window of the saloon. Dorval sent every body out of the way, till he had placed me in a corner of the room; where, undiscovered, I could see and hear all that past. Thus I had the pleasure of being a spectator of the whole play except the last scene. Another time I will explain why I was disappointed of seeing the conclusion.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

LYSIMOND.

DORVAL.

CLAIRVILLE.

CHARLES (Servant to DORVAL).

ANDREW (Servant to LYSIMOND).

SYLVESTER (Servant to CLAIRVILLE).

W O M E N.

CONSTANCE (Sister to CLAIRVILLE),

ROSELLA.

JUSTINA (Servant to ROSELLA).

And other Domestics.

(SCENE, a Saloon in CLAIRVILLE's House, at
ST. GERMAIN EN-LAYE.)

T H E

TEST of VIRTUE.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

SCENE, a Saloon furnished with chairs, card-tables, a chess-board, a frame for embroidery, with working materials ; at the farther end a sofa.

DORVAL is discovered sitting at a table, in a travelling dress ; his hair loose and disordered. After violent expressions of grief, he endeavours to sleep, but soon starts from his seat, takes out his watch and says,

D O R V A L.

'TIS hardly fix o'clock !
[Varying his posture, and in vain attempting to sleep, he rises.]

I cannot sleep.

[Takes up a book, opens and shuts it again mechanically.]
I don't understand a syllable I read.

[Walks hastily about the room.]
'Tis impossible to fly from myself—I must depart—
Depart ? Yes. I am fascinated here ! I love ! and
whom ? Dare I confess it, wretch that I am ! yet stay
—Here, Charles ! Charles ! [Calls aloud.]

B

S C E N E

SCENE II.

DORVAL, CHARLES.

[Thinking his master calls for his hat and sword, Charles brings and lays them on a chair.]

CHARLES.

Sir, do you want any thing else ?

DORVAL.

Order the chaise to the door.

CHARLES.

Bless me; sir, you are not going from hence ?

DORVAL.

Immediately.

[He sits the time he is speaking, and gathers up books, papers, pamphlets, &c. promiscuously to make into packets.]

CHARLES.

Sir, the family are all asleep !

DORVAL.

I don't intend seeing any body.

CHARLES.

Is it possible ?

DORVAL.

Certainly.

CHARLES.

Sir !

DORVAL.

[Turning towards him with an air of sadness.]
Well, Charles !

CHARLES.

You have been hospitably entertained in this house
—a favourite with every one—your very wishes
anticipated—yet you are going away without taking
leave !—Permit me, sir—

DORVAL.

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DORVAL.

I know what you would say——there is reason in it——but I must go.

CHARLES.

What will your friend Clairville and his sister say; who have so assiduously endeavoured to amuse you? [*In a lower tone.*] What will Rosella say? Can you depart without seeing her?

[*Dorval sighs heavily, his head reclining, whilst Charles proceeds.*]

Clairville flattered himself with having you at his wedding; Rosella was delighted with the thought of presenting you to her father——with your attending her to church—— [*Dorval appears disturbed.*] The good man arrives——and you are gone! Strange!——My dear sir, I must take the liberty of telling you, that such whimsical conduct is seldom the result of good-sense.——What Clairville! Constance! Rosella!

DORVAL, *in a quick tone, and rising.*

Get me a post-chaise this moment, I tell you.

CHARLES.

Just when Rosella's father returns, after a voyage of above a thousand leagues!——The eve of your friend's marriage!——

DORVAL, *angrily to Charles.*

Wretch! [*aside, biting his lip, and beating his breast.*] that I am!——You lose time, and I am impatient to be gone. [*To Charles.*]

CHARLES.

I obey.

DORVAL.

Let them make haste.

B 2

SCENE

SCENE III.

DORVAL alone.

[He continues walking and ruminating.]

Depart without bidding them adieu ! He is in the right ! They would call my behaviour capricious and inconsistent. And of what consequence is that ? Is the point in debate what they will infer, or what is honourable for me to do ? Though, after all, what objection is there to my seeing Clairville and his sister ? Can't I take leave without explaining my reasons ? And Rosella ? may I not once more behold her ?—No—Love and Friendship demand different duties ; especially an extravagant passion like mine, which she has no suspicion of, and which I ought to suppress.—But how will my behaviour be represented to her ? What must she think of it ? Oh, love, dangerous sophist ! I understand thy insinuations !

[Constance, tormented on her side with a passion that admits no repose, enters in a morning dress, followed by the servants, who set the room in order, and gather up Dorval's things. Charles, after ordering a post-chaise, re enters.]

SCENE IV.

DORVAL, CONSTANCE, Attendants.

DORVAL.

What, madam, so early up this morning !

CONSTANCE.

I could not sleep ; but I see you are not only up, but drest !

DORVAL, *with precipitation.*

I just now received letters—a pressing affair calls me to Paris—My presence there is indispensable—I'll 'drink 'a dish of tea, with your leave—(Charles, bring the tea.) take a hasty leave of Clairville—
thank

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Thank both for the civilities I have received——throw myself into a post-chaise——and away.

CONSTANCE,

Going directly? Impossible!

DORVAL.

Unfortunately, there is an absolute necessity for it.

[*The servants retire; Dorval drinks his tea; Constance leans on the table, in a meditating posture.*]

DORVAL.

Constance, you seem thoughtful.

CONSTANCE.

Yes—I was thinking!—but I am to blame.—You are weary of the inactive life we lead; this is not the first time I have perceived it.

DORVAL.

Weary of it! No, madam; believe me, you mistake—

CONSTANCE.

What then is the cause? why do I so frequently find you lost in melancholy?

DORVAL.

Misfortunes leave lasting traces—You are no stranger to—Madam, I swear to you, that for a long succession of years, I have known no felicity but what I tasted here.

CONSTANCE.

If this is true, you will undoubtedly return to us.

DORVAL.

That is uncertain.—Have I ever been master of my destiny?

CONSTANCE, *walking apart.*

This then is the only moment left—I must speak.
[*After a pause.*] Dorval, hear me! When you arrived here, six months ago, I was easy and happy. I had experienced all the wretchedness of an inconsiderate marriage.

riage. Released from rigorous bonds, I had formed a plan of independent happiness ; founded on an aversion to all future connections, and the tranquility of a retired life. How charming is solitude after a scene of distress ! There we breathe the air of freedom. I enjoyed my present reflections—I enjoyed my past troubles. They even seemed to have refined my reason ! My days, always innocent, sometimes delightful, were divided between reading, walking, and the conversation of my brother. Clairville talked to me incessantly of his serious and sublime friend. With what pleasure did I listen to him ! and how much did I long to be acquainted with a man so strongly entitled to my brother's respect and love ! who had cultivated in his mind the first seeds of wisdom ! I will go still farther—However remotely, I endeavoured to trace your system of education ; and the young Rosella, whom you see with us, has been the object of my care and attention, as Clairville was of yours.

DORVAL, *affected and softened.*

Rosella !

CONSTANCE.

I was sensible of my brother's affection for her ; and I made it my study to form the understanding and character of a girl who was one day to be the mistress of his fate. He is rash, I taught her to be prudent : he is impatient, I cultivated the natural softness of her disposition.—I felt a complacency in thinking I acted in concert with you in preparing the happiest marriage in the world, when you appeared—

[Here her voice falters a little, and her accent is more tender.]

Your presence, which ought to have exhilarated and encouraged me, had unexpected effects. By degrees my attention towards Rosella relaxed. I taught her no more the art of pleasing, nor was I long ignorant of the motive of that neglect. Dorval, I knew the ascendant virtue had acquired over all your actions ; and I became yet more enamoured of its charms. I
purposed

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purposed associating myself with her in the inmost recesses of your soul ; and I regarded this design as the most flattering to my own heart. Happy must that woman be, said I, whose only method of engaging the man she distinguishes, is to appear more and more worthy of her own approbation ; to be exalted in her own opinion. I have employed no other methods ; and if I have not silently waited the success, it is not hope that fails me, but time. Never can I doubt but virtue will give birth to love, if we snatch the fortunate moment. *[A short pause.]*

[What follows must be expressed with infinite disorder by such a character as Constance's.]

Shall I confess the greatest difficulty I had to encounter, was the suppression of those tender and involuntary movements which almost always betray a woman who loves ? Reason enforces our attention but by intervals ; the heart importunes, and will always be heard. Dorval, an hundred times the word fatal to my project, has trembled on my lips ! it has even sometimes escaped me ! and I congratulated my good fortune, that it never reached your ear. Such is the soul of Constance. If you desert her, she will have no cause to blush for her attachment. Remote from you, she will recover her repose in the bosom of virtue ! Whilst so many of her sex reflect with detestation on the moment when a criminal passion drew from their hearts the first sigh, Constance shall never recal your idea, without self-applause for discerning your worth. Or, should some pangs of regret intermingle with remembrance, she will find a perpetually sweet consolation in those sentiments you have inspired.

SCENE V.

DORVAL, CONSTANCE, CLAIRVILLE.

DORVAL.

Madam, here comes your brother.

CONSTANCE, *with concern.*

Brother, Dorval is going to leave us. *[Exit.]*

CLAIR-

I have just been informed so.

SCENE VI.

DORVAL, CLAIRVILLE.

DORVAL.

[Walking in a confused, embarrassed manner.]

Letters from Paris——An urgent affair——A banker who has failed——

CLAIRVILLE.

My friend, you must not leave me without granting me a moment's conversation. I never had so great occasion for your assistance.

DORVAL.

Dispose of me as you please. But it will be doing me justice to believe I have the strongest reasons——

CLAIRVILLE, *sorrowfully.*

I once had a friend; he deserts me!——I was beloved by Rosella; she abhors me!——Can you, Dorval, abandon me to despair?

DORVAL.

What can I do to assist you?

CLAIRVILLE.

You know the violence of my passion for Rosella! No, I mistake, you are ignorant of it. Before others, love is the boasted pride of my soul; in your presence, I almost blush to acknowledge it.——Yes, Dorval, I blush if you condemn my weakness, but still I must adore her! Impossible it is for me to tell you what I have endured! with what discretion and delicacy I imposed silence on the most ardent passion!——Rosella lived in retirement, with an aunt, in the neighbourhood, a woman advanced in years, an American by birth, my sister's friend. I beheld Rosella every day, and every day, in beholding her charms encrease,

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I felt an encrease of perturbation and trouble. Her aunt died : in her last moments she called my sister to her, and, with a trembling hand, pointed to Rosella, absorbed in grief at the feet of her bed. She gazed upon her in speechless agony ; then casting an expressive look at Constance, tears started from her eyes, she sighed—My sister comprehended all she would have said.—Rosella became her companion, her pupil, her friend ; and I the happiest of mankind. Constance saw my passion, Rosella appeared touched with it. My felicity was undisturbed by every thing but the will of an anxious mother, who solicited the return of her daughter. I was making preparations to conduct Rosella to her native country, when we heard of her mother's death, and that her father, notwithstanding his declining age, chose to return to France. Impatient for his arrival, as the completion of my happiness, he arrives, and I am miserable !

D O R V A L.

I cannot yet discover the cause of your misery.

C L A I R V I L L E.

I told it you at first : Rosella no longer loves me. Proportionably as the obstacles which retarded our union disappeared, she grew cold, reserved, indifferent. Those sentiments of tenderness which flowed from her lips with such enchanting simplicity, are succeeded by a constrained politeness that kills me. Every thing is become insipid to her ; nothing engages her attention ; nothing amuses. No sooner does she perceive me, than she endeavours to avoid me : her father's return, that long desired event, seems now uninteresting ; a gloomy taste for solitude is her supreme delight. Constance is treated with little more regard than her brother ; if she seeks the society of either, 'tis only to avoid being alone with the other : and, to complete my misfortune, my sister too seems regardless of my interest.

D O R V A L.

The sensibility of Clairville is not unknown to me.

C

His

His fancy is disturbed and perplexed, whilst the moment of his happiness approaches.

CLAIRVILLE.

Ah, my dear Dorval, you don't then believe—you don't see——

DORVAL.

I don't, indeed, see any thing in Rosella's behaviour, but such inequalities as women of the best hearts and education are most liable to; and which it sometimes gives us the liveliest pleasure to pardon. Their sentiments are so exquisitely refined, their souls so sensible, their organs so delicate, that a suspicion, a word, a thought, suffices to alarm them. A female mind, my friend, is like the polished crystal of a pure and transparent fountain, where the face of nature is painted serene and beautiful: let but a falling leaf agitate the surface, and every object becomes tremulous.

CLAIRVILLE, *sorrowfully*.

You revive me: but oh, Dorval, I am undone! Too well I am convinced that I cannot live without Rosella! Whatever be the result of my fate, I am determined to come to an explanation before I see her father.

DORVAL.

How can I serve you in this affair?

CLAIRVILLE.

By conversing with Rosella.

DORVAL.

Who, I? I converse with Rosella?

CLAIRVILLE.

Yes, you, my friend: there is no other person in the world capable of reviving her affection. I hope every thing from the esteem she professes for your character.

DORVAL.

Clairville, what do you require of me? Rosella is so little acquainted with me, and I am so utterly unfit for these kind of discussions——

CLAIR-

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CLAIRVILLE.

No one understands them so well——In short, you must not refuse me. Rosella reveres you; I have heard her say, your appearance inspires her with respect. She will be ashamed you should think her ungrateful, unjust, or inconstant. It is the august privilege of virtue, to communicate its influence sympathetically. Dorval shall reason with Rosella, and restore her to my wishes, such as she ought to be——such as she was.

DORVAL.

Unfortunate man !

CLAIRVILLE.

My friend, if I am unfortunate——

DORVAL.

You insist, then, on my——

CLAIRVILLE.

I do.

DORVAL.

You shall be satisfied.

SCENE VII.

DORVAL *alone.*

What an unfortunate embarrassment !——the brother——the sister——Ah, cruel friend ! infatuated lover ! what a task do you injoin !——An interview with Rosella ! I who wish concealment from my own observation, to be exposed to her's !——What will become of me, should she divine my thoughts ? How shall I controul my eyes, my voice, my heart ? Who can answer for my conduct ?——Virtue ! Alas, have I still that to boast !

END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT II. SCENE I.

ROSELLA, JUSTINA.

ROSELLA.

JUSTINA, set my work in order.

[Justina brings a frame for embroidery ; Rosella leans over it dejectedly ; Justina sits on the opposite side ; they work. Rosella is interrupted by tears ; she wipes her eyes, and goes on. A short silence ensues, during which Justina lays down her needle, and surveys her mistress attentively.]

JUSTINA.

Is this the joy, madam, with which you expect my old master ? and are these the transports you prepare for his reception ? I have been an entire stranger to your heart lately. What passes there is not quite right, I am sure, because you don't entrust me with it ; and so far, indeed, I can't blame you.

[Rosella answers only with sighs, silence, and tears.]

Have you lost your wits, my young lady ? In the moment your father arrives ! in the moment you are going to be married ! I say again, are you distracted ?

ROSELLA.

No, Justina.

JUSTINA, after a pause.

Possibly some accident has happened to the good old gentleman ?

[All these questions are made at proper intervals, in which Justina lays down and resumes her work.]

ROSELLA.

No.

JUSTINA, after rather a longer pause.

Perhaps you don't like Clairville. Now I have guessed right !

ROSELLA.

No.

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JUSTINA.

[Looks disconcerted, but inquisitive ; at last she speaks.]

What then can be the cause of all this sighing and sobbing ? Ay, for that matter, the men may well say we are fantastical ; that our heads are turned to-day about a lover, whom to-morrow we wish a thousand miles off ! But let them say the worst they can, I'll be hanged if ever I contradict them. — You can't expect, madam, that I should approve such caprice. — Here is Clairville loves you to distraction ; has never given you the slightest offence. Now when a woman has the good fortune to flatter herself with the conquest of a tender, faithful, complaisant admirer ; one who is handsome, sensible, and well-bred ; I have no conception of her treating him ill without a cause ! There must be something in this more than I can find out.

[Justina is silent a moment ; Rosella continues to work and weep ; Justina assumes a canting, insinuating tone of voice, without lifting her eyes from her work.]

After all, if you really don't love Clairville, to be sure 'tis a sad affair. At the same time there is no occasion to despair as you do. — What is there no other man in the world to bestow your heart upon ?

ROSELLA.

No.

JUSTINA.

Oh, that's a point which time must determine.

Dorval enters. Justina withdraws.

ROSELLA.

[Endeavouring to compose her countenance.]

Oh, Heaven ! 'tis Dorval !

SCENE II.

DORVAL, ROSELLA.

DORVAL, with some emotion.

Permit me, madam, before my departure, and in obedience to the *[Rosella looks surprised.]* commands of a friend,

a friend, to endeavour to serve him in what he thinks essential to his peace of mind. You must be sensible no person in the world is more warmly interested in the happiness of both. Give me leave then to ask, in what particular Clairville has been so unfortunate as to offend you; and how he has merited that cool reserve he complains of?

ROSELLA.

He is no longer the object of my affection.

DORVAL.

No longer the object of your affection!

ROSELLA.

No.

DORVAL.

And what has he been guilty of, to draw upon himself so terrible a punishment?

ROSELLA.

Nothing. I liked him once; he is now become indifferent. Probably my conduct has not been free from levity. I acknowledge it.

DORVAL.

Have you forgot Clairville was the man your heart preferred? Do you consider him as the most miserable of mankind, when deprived of the hope of recovering that heart? Believe me, madam, it is inconsistent with the character of a woman of honour to trifle with the character and happiness of a worthy man?

ROSELLA.

I am sensible the world will load me with reproaches. — Alas! I sink under my own — would I were dead!

DORVAL.

Rosella cannot be unjust!

ROSELLA.

I know not what I am. — Self-approbation is lost.

DOR-

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DORVAL.

But why do you cease to love Clairville? There must be some cause for this alteration.

ROSELLA.

I love another.—That is the cause.

DORVAL.

Can Rosella ! can she !—

ROSELLA.

Yes, Dorval,—but Clairville is amply revenged !

DORVAL.

Rosella, if unfortunately your heart had been surprised—irresistibly seduced by a passion—condemned by reason—(Cruel situation, I have known thee !) then, indeed, I could have pitied you.

ROSELLA.

Behold me then the object of your pity !

[Dorval answers only by a look of commiseration.]

Clairville was dear to me. I imagined it impossible I could ever love another; when I struck upon a rock fatal to my constancy and our mutual repose.—Chance brought me acquainted with one whose animated countenance, awfully amiable ! whose voice, sweetly melodious ! was the very transcript of that ideal mode of beauty nature had imprinted on my heart. At the first glance I beheld all those perfections realized which had hitherto been considered as chimerical. My esteem for him was involuntary. Could I have apprehended it would have interfered with my engagements to Clairville—But, alas ! suspicion slept till I was totally lost in a passion for his rival—And how impossible to avoid it !—A sympathetic harmony of soul taught us the same thoughts, the same sentiments, the same expressions !—What can I add more ? In the conversation of others I scarcely discerned the most distant resemblance of my own mind : in his [*Casting down her eyes and lowering her voice*] I always beheld it reflected with dazzling lustre !

DORVAL.

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DORVAL.

And is this happy mortal acquainted with his felicity?

ROSELLA.

If he thinks it felicity, he can't be ignorant of it!

DORVAL.

Rosella, doubtless, must have inspired a reciprocal passion?

ROSELLA.

Dorval, your heart can answer you!

DORVAL.

Yes, my heart acknowledges your charms—feels them too sensibly—Alas! what have I heard! what have I said!—Who will save me from my own reproaches?

[Dorval and Rosella regard each other silently; Rosella bursts into tears.]

Enter SYLVESTER.

Sir, my master begs to speak with you.

DORVAL.

Rosella—But we are interrupted. Reflect that Clairville is my friend and your lover!

ROSELLA.

Dorval, adieu!

[Presents her hand, he kisses it with an air of sadness.]

DORVAL.

Adieu! what a word!

SCENE III.

DORVAL *solus.*

How beautiful in grief! what touching charms! I would have given my life for one of those pearly drops! "Dorval, your heart can answer you." Words that still vibrate there, and never can be erased from my memory!

SCENE

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SCENE IV.

DORVAL, CLAIRVILLE.

CLAIRVILLE.

Pardon my impatience—Well, Dorval.

[Dorval appears disconcerted; endeavours unsuccessfully to recollect himself: Clairville, who seeks to read his destiny in the eyes of his friend, perceives his disorder, and mistaking the cause, says,

Silent—distressed—in tears! 'tis too plain—I am undone!

[Throws himself into the arms of his friend unable to speak; Dorval weeps over him; and Clairville, in a faint voice interrupted with sighs,

What has she said?—tell me—what is my crime? My friend, for pity's sake, destroy me at once!

DORVAL.

Who? I destroy you!

CLAIRVILLE.

Rosella plunges a dagger in my breast; and you, whose lenient hand, perhaps, might heal the wound, you leave me! abandon me to despair!—Betrayed by my mistress! deserted by my friend! what a prospect! Dorval, why will you not speak to me?

DORVAL.

What can I say?—I fear to speak.

CLAIRVILLE.

Though I am petrified with apprehension, yet tell me all;—it will, at least, vary my sufferings!—Your silence seems, at this instant, the most insupportable of them all.

DORVAL, in a faltering voice.

Rosella—

CLAIRVILLE, in the same.

Rosella!—say—what?

D

DORVAL.

DORVAL.

As you rightly conjectured——does not appear to me possessed of that ardent degree of affection which promises an early marriage.

CLAIRVILLE.

She is changed, indeed ! In what have I offended ?

DORVAL.

She is not changed, believe me, nor have you offended her——but her father——

CLAIRVILLE.

Has not withdrawn his consent ?

DORVAL.

No——but she waits his arrival——she has apprehensions that——You know, Clairville, better than I, that a woman of delicacy is never without apprehensions.

CLAIRVILLE.

There can't be the smallest foundation for any ! Every obstacle is removed. Her mother dead——there can be no farther opposition from her : and the sole intention of her father in returning to his native soil is to unite his daughter's fate with mine ; and spend the remainder of his days in tranquility and social endearments ; encircled by his family and friends. If I may judge by his letters, this venerable old man would be little less afflicted than myself at the disappointment of our hopes. Think, Dorval, of his having surmounted insuperable difficulties, disposed of his estates, and at near fourscore years of age, embarked on a sea covered with the enemies fleet !

DORVAL.

Clairville, we must patiently expect his arrival. We must hope every thing from the father's goodness, and the daughter's honour——from your love and my friendship ! Heaven will not suffer beings who seemed to have been created for the consolation and encouragement

THE TEST OF VIRTUE. 19

agement of virtue to be lastingly unhappy without being criminal.

CLAIRVILLE.

Do you then wish me to live ?

DORVAL.

Ah, Clairville, do I wish it ?——Could you read my soul !——But have I satisfied all you require at present ?

CLAIRVILLE.

'Tis with regret I understand your question. Go, my friend, your leaving me in my present circumstances convinces me the occasion is pressing. I have only one moment to request.——My sister, alarmed at some disagreeable reports, relating to Rosella's father and her fortune, went out, with reluctance, to enquire into the truth. I promised not to part with you till she returned. You will not refuse her this favour ?

DORVAL.

The requests of Constance are sacred with me.

CLAIRVILLE.

Of Constance ! alas ! I have sometimes thought——But we will reserve these thoughts for happier hours.——I know where she is, and will bring her to you immediately.

SCENE V.

DORVAL *solus*.

Is there no end of my misfortunes ! I inspire the sister of my friend with a secret passion. I am plunged in an extravagant one for the woman he adores ; she returns it.——Why do I stay longer in a house that I have filled with distraction ? Where is honour ? Not in my conduct surely ! [*calls hastily*] Charles ! Charles !——He won't come near me——every body avoids me !

[*Throws himself into a chair in a deep reverie ; speaks by starts.*]

Yet, if these were the first misfortunes I had occasioned !——But wherever I go to drag misery along with me ! Wretched mortals, the miserable sport of fortune——be confident of your virtue ! I brought hither a pure un-

spotted soul.—Yes, it is yet unfulfilled ! I found here persons who appeared the favourites of heaven. A woman of virtue and complacency of mind. A passionate lover, happy in the affection of a young beauty, tender and reasonable. The woman of virtue loses her repose, by the indulgence of a tormenting passion ! The lover is a prey to despair ! and the inconstancy of his mistress only makes her more supremely wretched !—Could the most consummate villain have wrought a scene of deeper distress ? O, Thou, the disposer of all events, who hast brought me here, justify thy mysterious ways !—I know not where I am—[*Calls again.*] Charles ! Charles !

SCENE VI.

DORVAL, CHARLES, SYLVESTER.

CHARLES.

Sir, the horses are put to. Every thing is ready.

[*Exit.*]

SYLVESTER.

Sir, my lady is returned—she is coming down this moment.

DORVAL.

Constance ?

SYLVESTER.

Yes, sir.

[*Exit.*]*Re-enter* CHARLES.[*He addresses Dorval, who stands in a thoughtful attitude, looking at him whilst he speaks.*]

Sir, [*Searching his pockets*] I don't think but your impatience infects me !—No—I have it not.—Common Sense is certainly fled from this house: pray heaven we may meet with her upon the road !—I had entirely forgot I had a letter for you—and now I do recollect it, I don't know what is become of it.—O, I have it at last !

DORVAL.

Give it me.

SCENE

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SCENE VII.

DORVAL *solus.*

[*Reads.*] “Shame and remorse pursue me.—Dorval; you know the laws of innocence—have I violated them?—Save me!—Alas! is it not already too late?—How I pity my father! and Clairville, I would sacrifice my life for his repose.—Adieu, Dorval, I would sacrifice a thousand lives for yours! Adieu! You leave me, and I die with grief.”

[*After reading it with a voice interrupted with sighs, and all the marks of extreme trouble, he throws himself into a chair; a moment's reflection ensues; he casts a wandering and distracted look again upon the letter, which he grasps with a trembling hand, repeating,*

“Shame and remorse pursue me.” It is I who ought to blush!—be torn with remorse. [*Reads*] “You know the laws of innocence.”—Once they were familiar to me.—“Have I violated them?” No, I alone am guilty.—“You leave me, and I die!” O heaven! I sink under this weight of woe! I must tear myself from hence—I will.—Impossible!—reason totters—In what darkness am I enclosed! Oh, Rosella! virtue! torture!

[*Rises in an agony, slowly advancing to the table, he writes some lines with apparent emotion. Charles runs in, crying aloud.*

CHARLES.

Sir, make haste—fly to his assistance—to Clairville's—some villains—they assassinate him—

[*Dorval, leaving his letter unfinished on the table, snatches up his sword, and hastens to rescue his friend. In this confusion, Constance enters, and is surprized at their abrupt departure.*

SCENE IX.

CONSTANCE *alone.*

What can be the meaning of this behaviour? He must have expected me, yet the moment I enter—he vanishes!

vanishes ! Dorval, you are a stranger to the soul of Constance——I have fortitude to conquer——But what's here ? a letter ! [*Reads.*] “ I love you, and I fly—alas ! infinitely too late ! I am Clairville's friend. “ ——The duties of friendship, the sacred laws of hospitality——” Heavens ! what transporting happiness !——he loves me ! Dorval you love me——[*walks hastily about the room.*] I insist upon your staying.——Frivolous fears !——fantastic delicacy——my heart is yours !——To be so entirely unacquainted with mine and Clairville's way of thinking ! No, I find you don't know us——but whilst I indulge myself in talking, perhaps he is gone. [*Runs out.*]

END of the SECOND ACT.



ACT III. SCENE I.

DORVAL, CLAIRVILLE.

CLAIRVILLE.

BE assured, any other in my situation would have acted in the same manner.

DORVAL.

I believe so——but I know your disposition is rather impetuous.

CLAIRVILLE.

I was in too much affliction to be irritated by a slight provocation.——But what is your opinion of those reports that my sister went to her friend's house about ?

DORVAL.

They don't seem to concern us.

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CLAIRVILLE.

Pardon me ; there is an agreement in the name : they mention a vessel taken, an old man called Merian.

DORVAL.

With your favour——let us leave the ship and the old man, and return to the cause of your quarrel. Why do you keep me ignorant of a thing which is the general subject of conversation, and, consequently, I must soon be informed of ?

CLAIRVILLE.

I like better you should hear it from any other person.

DORVAL.

I have not the same reliance on any other person's veracity.

CLAIRVILLE.

Well, since you absolutely insist upon particulars, I must confess that you were the cause of the dispute.

DORVAL.

I the cause ?

CLAIRVILLE.

You. The men who attacked me were two worthless abandoned poltroons. One of them had, for some infamous practices, been forbid the house by my sister. The other had, formerly, some designs upon Rosella. I found them with the lady my sister had just quitted. They talked of your departure, for nothing is a secret here ; they were in doubt whether to congratulate or condole with me upon it ; both thought it very unaccountable.

DORVAL.

Why unaccountable ?

CLAIRVILLE.

Because, said one, your sister is in love with him.

DORVAL.

He did me great honour.

CLAIR-

CLAIRVILLE.

Ay, replied the other, but Dorval is in love with your mistress!

DORVAL.

I—

CLAIRVILLE.

So he said.

DORVAL.

With Rosella?

CLAIRVILLE.

Yes, with Rosella.

DORVAL.

Clairville, can you believe—

CLAIRVILLE.

I believe you incapable of treachery.

[Dorval seems disturbed.]

A dishonourable sentiment never found admittance into the soul of Dorval, nor an unjust suspicion into that of Clairville.

DORVAL.

My friend—spare my confusion—

CLAIRVILLE.

I only do you justice.—So, turning upon them with a look of scorn and indignation [*looking at Dorval, who, afraid to meet his eyes, turns away his face, biding it with his hands.*] I told them it was the indication of a base and groveling mind to be hasty in suspecting others, [*Dorval feels every word.*] and that in whatever company I was, I expected my mistress, my sister, and my friend should be treated with respect. You approve my resentment, I dare say?

DORVAL.

I can't blame you—no—but—

CLAIRVILLE.

An answer ensued. They left the room. I followed. They fell upon me—

DOR-

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DORVAL.

And they had murdered you, if I had not run to your assistance.

CLAIRVILLE.

I certainly am indebted to you for my life!

DORVAL.

That is, in other words, one moment's delay, and I had been your assassin.

CLAIRVILLE.

You can't possibly consider it in that light! You might have lost your friend, but your honour would have remained unimpeached. Can innocence always secure us from the blast of calumny?

DORVAL.

Perhaps not.

CLAIRVILLE.

Or prevent injurious expressions?

DORVAL.

Perhaps not.

CLAIRVILLE.

How unreasonable then is this self-accusation!

DORVAL.

Rather say, how invincible are the charms of virtue and innocence, whilst vice sinks nerveless at their touch!

SCENE II.

DORVAL, CLAIRVILLE, CONSTANCE.

CONSTANCE.

My brother! — Dorval! — What terrors have we been in about you! I tremble yet — and Rosella is half dead with apprehension.

DORVAL and CLAIRVILLE

Rosella!

[Speaking together.

[Dorval checks his transports.

E

CLAIR-

CLAIRVILLE.

I fly on the wings of love to comfort her !

CONSTANCE, *stopping him.*

Justina is with her ; I left her this instant, and told her you were safe. Be easy about her.

CLAIRVILLE.

I want to be with Rosella ; I want to be with Dorval ! I can't conceive why he is so dejected——when he has just saved the life of his friend too ! My dear Dorval, if you have any sorrows, why will you not pour them into the bosom of a man who shares all your sentiments ? who, were he happy himself, would wish to live only for Dorval and Rosella.

CONSTANCE, *presenting a letter.*

Come, brother, I'll trust you with his secret and my own. This will probably account for his melancholy.

DORVAL.

Just Heaven ! it is my letter !

CONSTANCE.

Yes, Dorval, no more thoughts of parting.——I know the whole affair——have adjusted all preliminaries.——What inconceivable delicacy could make you so great an enemy to your own repose ? To love me——yet leave me.

DORVAL.

Madam, I must now leave you ; 'tis impossible to avoid it——the malice of my fate pursues me.——That letter——Good God ! what was I going to say ! [*aside.*

CLAIRVILLE.

What's this ! My friend, my deliverer, desirous to become my brother ? What an accumulation of happiness and of gratitude !

CONSTANCE.

Let these transports of joy prove the disinterestedness of his sentiments, and the unreasonableness of your fears.

But

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But what unknown motive, Dorval, suspends your rapture? If I am the object of your tenderness, why am I estranged from your confidence?

DORVAL.

[In a melancholy tone of voice, and with a dejected air.]

Clairville!

CLAIRVILLE.

My friend, you are melancholy?

DORVAL.

True.

CONSTANCE.

Speak, Dorval, banish this reserve. Unbosom yourself to your friend.—*[He continues silent.]* But I perceive my presence is a restraint.—I'll leave you together. *[Exit.]*

SCENE III.

DORVAL, CLAIRVILLE.

CLAIRVILLE.

Dorval, we are now alone.—Had you any doubt of my approbation of your marriage with my sister? Why have you made a mystery of your passion? I can excuse Constance, she's a woman, but that you should! Not a word?

[Dorval listens to him with a downcast look, his arms crossed.]

CLAIRVILLE.

Were you apprehensive that my sister, informed of the circumstances of your birth—

DORVAL.

[Remains in a fixed posture, turning his head a little towards Clairville.]

Clairville, you offend me. My soul is too lofty to conceive apprehensions like these. Were Constance not superior to such prejudices, I dare affirm she would not be worthy of me!

Forgive me, my dear Dorval, but the obstinate grief in which I see you plunged when every thing appears propitious to your wishes—

DORVAL, *aside, with bitterness.*

Yes, all succeeds wonderfully in my favour!

CLAIRVILLE.

This settled gloom disturbs, confounds, and perplexes my mind with a multiplicity of suggestions. A more unreserved confidence, on your part, might save me from many false ones.—My friend, you have never opened your heart to me!—Dorval has no taste for those delightful expansions!—His soul, contracted within itself—One more conjecture—Possibly you fear, that a second marriage, in depriving me of the moiety of a fortune, which, however inconsiderable, the world thought me secure of, might raise an objection to my marriage with Rosella?

DORVAL, *sorrowfully.*

Behold *that* Rosella! Clairville, take care to support the impression your danger has made upon her heart.

SCENE IV.

DORVAL, CLAIRVILLE, ROSELLA, JUSTINA.

CLAIRVILLE, *running to meet her.*

May I hope that Rosella was alarmed for my safety? that she was anxious for my life? How shall I prize the moment that threatened me with death, if it has rekindled in her breast one spark of affection!

ROSELLA.

Your rashness has indeed given me concern.

CLAIRVILLE.

How fortunate am I!

[*Attempting to kiss her hand, which she withdraws.*]

RO-

THE TEST OF VIRTUE. 29

ROSELLA.

Hold, sir—I am sensible of all the obligations we owe to Dorval; but I am not ignorant, that however fortunately these kind of adventures terminate for a man's reputation, the consequences are always fatal for that of a woman.

DORVAL.

Madam, this was an accidental rencounter, and honour has its laws.

CLAIRVILLE.

I am wretched, Rosella, in the thought of having displeased you. Cease to overwhelm with affliction the most submissive and tender lover in the universe! Or, if you have resolved my destruction, at least forbear to distress my friend, who would be completely happy were you less unjust. Dorval loves my sister!—is beloved by her!—He was going to leave us—when a letter accidentally discovered all.—Would but Rosella consent, an indissoluble union should ensure our bliss. Dorval and Constance! Clairville and Rosella!—Consent, my fair, and heaven will again behold this dwelling with smiles of complacency!

ROSELLA.

I die!

[Sinking into a chair.]

DORVAL, and CLAIRVILLE.

O heaven! she faints!

[Clairville falls at her feet.]

DORVAL, calling the servants.

Charles! Sylvester! Justina!

JUSTINA, running to assist her.

You see, madam, what has happened.—You would venture out of your room.—I foretold it all.

ROSELLA, recovering.

Let us go, Justina.

CLAIRVILLE, offering to support her.

Rosella—

R O-

ROSELLA.

Leave me—I hate you—leave me.

SCENE V.

DORVAL, CLAIRVILLE.

[Clairville quits Rosella, walks about the room in a frantic manner; stops; his sighs are expressions of grief and rage; leans on the back of a chair, supporting his head with his hands; a short silence.]

CLAIRVILLE.

It is enough!—Behold the fruit of all my anxiety!—the reward of that profusion of tenderness!

—“Leave me, I hate you,” Ah!—

[Breaking into inarticulate accents of despair, traverses the room in great agitation, repeating with violent and various agitation,

“Leave me—I hate you.”—

[Throws himself into a chair; sits a moment silent; then, in a low dejected tone, repeats,

She “hates me,” and what have I done to deserve her hatred? Alas, I have loved too well!

[Pauses; then rises and walks rather more composedly.

Yes, I am odious to her; I see it; I am sensible of it.—

Dorval, you are my friend; shall I-tear myself from her and die? Speak! decide my doom.

Enter Charles. Clairville walks away.

SCENE VI.

DORVAL, CLAIRVILLE, CHARLES.

CHARLES.

Sir— [With tremor at seeing the disorder of Clairville.

CLAIRVILLE.

Well, what's the matter? [Casting a side glance at him.

CHARLES.

There is a stranger without, who desires to speak with you.

CLAIR-

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CLAIRVILLE *hastily*.

Let him wait.

CHARLES, *still in a faltering low voice*.

He seems in distress, and has already waited a long while.

CLAIRVILLE.

Bid him come in.

SCENE VII.

DORVAL, CLAIRVILLE, JUSTINA, CHARLES,
SYLVESTER, ANDREW.

The rest of the servants of the house disperse themselves about the room.

CLAIRVILLE, *a little sharply*.

Who are you? What is your business?

ANDREW.

Sir, my name is Andrew; I am the servant of a worthy old gentleman; I have been the companion of his misfortunes; and my business is to acquaint his daughter with her father's arrival.

CLAIRVILLE.

Who? Rosella?

ANDREW.

Yes, sir.

CLAIRVILLE.

Yet more afflictions! Where is your master, what is become of him?

ANDREW.

Don't be alarmed, sir, he is alive, and landed safe. I will inform you of every particular, if my strength will permit, and if you will have the goodness to attend.

CLAIRVILLE.

Proceed.

AN-

ANDREW.

My master and I left the harbour of *Fort Royal* on the sixth of July, in a ship called *L'Apparent*. I never saw my master in better health, nor in so high spirits. Sometimes turning his face towards the coast where the wind seemed to blow us, he lifted up his hands to heaven, requesting a speedy voyage : and sometimes looking at me with eyes beaming with hope, he said, "Andrew, in fifteen days I shall behold my children, I shall fold them in my arms ; and I shall taste of happiness once at least before I die."

CLAIRVILLE, *affected*.

[*Speaking to Dorval.*] You understand !——he calls me already by the sweet appellation of Son.—Well, Andrew ?

ANDREW.

Sir, how shall I relate it ? We had the most fortunate voyage imaginable. We bordered on the coast of France ; escaped from the dangers of the sea, we welcomed land with a thousand shouts of joy, embracing one another promiscuously, commanders, officers, passengers, and sailors ; when a vessel accosted us, which under the ensigns and cry of *Peace*, perfidiously boarded, and made us prisoners !*

DORVAL and CLAIRVILLE.

[*Testifying their surprize and concern by the action agreeable to their characters.*]

Prisoners !

ANDREW.

What then became of my master ? Tears streamed from his eyes ; he poured forth heavy sighs ; casting eager looks and extended arms towards the shore that lessened to our view. His very soul seemed transported there. But when we had totally lost sight of it, he ceased to weep ; his heart inclosed its sorrows within itself ; immoveably fixing his eyes upon the water, he fell into a sullen gloomy state, which gave me apprehen-

* This Piece was written soon after admiral Boscawen had taken the French ships in the Mediterranean ere war was declared.

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sions for his life. I in vain offered him bread and water, he remained inflexible to my intreaties. [Andrew *is interrupted by his tears.*] At length we arrived in the enemy's port. Dispense with me from relating the sequel—No—I never can do it.

CLAIRVILLE.

Andrew, take time ; try to collect yourself.

ANDREW.

They pillaged me. They loaded my master with irons. I could no longer restrain the violence of my grief. I cried aloud several times, my master ! my dear master ! He heard me ; looked at me ; let his arms drop ; turned his face away, and followed his persecutors in silence. I was then thrown, half naked, into the deepest dungeon of a prison ; mingled with a crowd of unfortunate wretches, inhumanly abandoned to filth, and to the most dreadful extremes of hunger, thirst, and sickness. To paint in few words all the horrors of the place, I will tell you, that at the same instant, I heard the accents of grief, intermixed with the shrieks of despair ; and on which ever side I turned me, death met my eyes ! *

CLAIRVILLE.

Is this the nation so renowned for wisdom ? eternally held up to us as the model of perfection ! And is it thus they treat their fellow-creatures !

DORVAL.

How amazingly must the spirit of that generous nation be debased !

ANDREW.

At the expiration of three days, after being blended in that mass of dead and dying persons ; all Frenchmen ! all victims of treachery ! I was drawn forth. They threw over me some tattered rags, and led me, with more of my companions in misery, through several streets of the city, crowded by a licentious populace, who loaded us with imprecations and indignities.

F

Whilst

* This Drama was first published in the year 1757, before the French prisoners had experienced the great generosity, humanity, and benevolence of the English nation.

Whilst a race of men, totally different in manners and sentiment, whom the tumult had drawn to the windows of their houses, showered upon us money for our relief.

DORVAL.

What an incredible compound of humanity, generosity, and barbarity!

ANDREW.

They did not give me the satisfaction of knowing whether I was to be set at liberty, or dragged to punishment.

CLAIRVILLE.

And your master, Andrew, what of him?

ANDREW.

I was discharged. This was the first kind office of a correspondent of my master's, whom he had informed of our distress. I flew to one of the city gaols.——They unlocked the doors of a dark dungeon.——I descended.——I had already remained sometime motionless in this gloomy cavern, when the sound of a dying voice alarmed me; so faint, that it seemed quite extinguished in pronouncing these words, "Andrew, is it thee? I have "a long time expected thee." I run to the corner from whence the voice proceeded, and met, with arms cold and uncovered, that sought to find me. I prest them close to my bosom, kissed, and bathed them with my tears.——They were my master's!——*[After a short pause.]* Naked——extended on the damp ground he lay!——"The wretched inhabitants of this place," said he to me, in a broken voice, "have imposed upon "my age and weakness, by forcing from me my scanty "pittance of bread and straw."

[Here all the domestics pour forth cries of sorrow; Clairville can no longer command his grief. Dorval makes a sign to Andrew to discontinue his narration a moment. He stops and afterwards goes on, groaning piteously.]

I then stripped off my rags, and threw them upon my master; who, in an expiring tone, blest the bounty of heaven.

DORVAL.

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DORVAL, *aside, and with bitterness.*

For suffering him to die at the bottom of a dungeon, covered with the tattered rags of his servant !

A N D R E W.

I then recollected the alms I had received. I employed the money for some refreshment to revive my old and respectable master. When his strength was a little recovered, "Be of good courage, Andrew, said he ; thou shalt live to go out of this prison. For me, my infirmities make me sensible, I must inevitably perish here." At these words, I felt his arms about my neck ; he laid his cheek close to mine, whilst *his* tears trickled down my face. "My friend," an appellation he often bestowed, continued he, "Thou shalt receive my last sighs ! thou shalt convey to my children my last words ! Alas ! it was from my own mouth they ought to have heard them !"

C L A I R V I L L E.

[*Looking at Dorval and bursting into tears.*

His children !

A N D R E W.

During our voyage he had informed me, that he was born in France ; that *Merian* was not his real name ; but that in leaving his country he had likewise parted with his family name, for reasons I should one day be acquainted with. Alas ! he did not then think that day so near !—After repeated sighs he was preparing to give me further information, when we heard our prison doors open.—We heard ourselves called ! It was that *old correspondent* who had restored us to each other, and was now come to deliver us from our bonds. What was his affliction when he beheld his old friend almost a breathless corpse ! Tears flowed from his eyes. He dressed us in his own cloaths, and gave us an apartment in his house, where we received the most cordial marks of benevolence. One might have said, that this worthy family blushed in secret for the cruelty and injustice of their countrymen.

DORVAL.

Nothing, certainly, is so humiliating to a good mind as national oppressions.

ANDREW, *with more tranquility.*

My master, in a short time, recruited his health and strength. His friend offered him his purse, which I imagine he accepted ; for when we were released from prison, we had not money enough to purchase a morsel of bread. The dispositions for our return to France were settled, and we were ready to go on board, when my master, taking me apart (no, I shall never forget it whilst I breathe) said to me, "Andrew, hast thou no farther business here?" "None, sir," I replied. "Dost thou not remember our fellow-citizens, whom we left in want and anguish, from which heaven was graciously pleased to relieve us? Go, my good lad, bid them a tender adieu." I hastened to obey him; but, alas! how small a number remained of those unfortunate men! and those few so emaciated, so near their last hour, that scarcely had they strength to reach out their hands to receive my master's bounty. I have now given you, sir, a full detail of our unprosperous voyage.

[A long silence succeeds, during which Dorval seems deep in thought, and walks to the farther end of the saloon,

ANDREW.

I left my master at Paris to recover his fatigue. He delighted himself with the expectation of meeting a friend there.

[Dorval advances, and listens to Andrew attentively, But that friend had been absent several months ; so my master intended to follow me very soon.

CLAIRVILLE,

Have you seen Rosella?

ANDREW.

No, sir; I am the messenger of ill news, and therefore was unwilling to appear before her.

CLAIR-

THE TEST OF VIRTUE. 37

CLAIRVILLE.

Andrew, a little repose is necessary for you.—Sylvester, I recommend him to your care. See that he wants for nothing.

[The servants gather round Andrew, and lead him out;

SCENE VIII.

[Dorval remains immovable, his head cast down, his air pensive, and his arms crossed (his usual attitude). Clairville walks with hasty steps. After being some time silent, the latter speaks.

CLAIRVILLE.

Well, my friend, what think you? are not these things against the maxim, that "Virtue alone is happiness?" Tell me; do you think there is at this moment one man of probity happy upon the globe?

DORVAL.

Rather say one who wants probity: but, Clairville, let us have done moralizing. He reasons on false principles who fancies he has any just complaint against Providence.—What are your present intentions?

CLAIRVILLE.

You see the whole extent of my misfortunes. I have lost the heart of Rosella.—Alas! that is the only treasure I regret! It may be injurious to suspect that the narrowness of my fortune is the private motive of her inconstancy; but should it be so, how vastly must that motive be strengthened now her own is reduced! Will she ever expose herself to all the inconveniencies of a situation little above indigence for a man she does not love? Can I myself solicit her to be wretched? Ought I to do it? Her father will now be an additional burthen to her. It is uncertain whether he will give me his daughter; and in accepting her, 'tis almost evident I should compleat her wretchedness. Weigh, and determine how I ought to act,

DOR-

DORVAL.

This Andrew has filled my soul with disquietude. Were I to tell you the ideas which arose during his recital.—That old man,—his discourse—his character—the alteration of his name!—But leave me to dispel the suspicions that beset me, that I may reflect coolly on your affairs.

CLAIRVILLE.

Remember, Dorval, the fate of Clairville depends upon your determination.

SCENE IX.

DORVAL *alone.*

What a day of affliction and trouble! Such a variety of tormenting incidents! A cloud of darkness seems gathering round, to involve a heart already sinking under a thousand distracting reflections! O Heaven! vouchsafe me one moment of repose! Diffimulation and falsehood are my abhorrence; yet, by a strange fatality I deceive my friend, his sister, and Rosella.—In what a light must I appear to her!—How am I to advise her lover?—How regulate my own behaviour to Constance?—Dorval, art thou the slave of temptation, or the friend of honour?—An unforeseen event has ruined Rosella's fortune. She is poor. I am rich. I adore her. I am beloved. Clairville can never obtain her.—Begone—depart from my imagination—from my heart—shameful illusions! I may be the unhappiest of mankind; I will not be the vilest! Virtue, enchanting yet cruel power! dear, yet savage duties of friendship, that captivate, that tear my heart! ye shall be obeyed. O virtue, what art thou but a name, if thou exactest no sacrifice from thy votaries? And thou, friendship, art only a fleeting shadow, unless our passions yield obedience to thy laws!—Clairville must marry Rosella!

[*He falls almost senseless into a chair; rises at last, and says,* No, I never will rob my friend of the woman he doats on. I will not degrade my own character by an action so ignoble. Conscience forbids it. Woe to that man
2 who

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who refuses to listen to the dictates of his conscience !
 —But Clairville's fortune is contracted. Rosella is stripped of all.—These objections must be removed ! I can, I will remove them. There are few distresses of the mind that are not to be relieved by extraordinary efforts of generosity ! Ah ! I begin to breathe already ? If I resolve not to espouse Rosella, what occasion have I for wealth ? Can I make a more glorious disposition of it, than in promoting the happiness of persons infinitely dear to me ? Alas ! to speak impartially, this sacrifice, however uncommon, has very little pretensions to merit.—Clairville, Rosella, her father, shall all be indebted to me for their happiness !—And Constance ? I will open my whole heart to her. I will conceal nothing. She will tremble at the thought of an attachment to a destiny like mine !—In restoring tranquility around me, I shall undoubtedly taste that contentment which flies my pursuit. [*Sighs.*] Dorval, why art thou still miserable ? still the victim of sorrow ? O virtue, have I not enough submitted to thy dictates ? But Rosella will never consent to oblige me by receiving a fortune at my hands.—She knows the value of such a favour too well to confer it on the man she must detest and despise !—Some deceit is requisite !—What shall be the method ?—Let me consider.—I must anticipate her father's arrival—infer a paragraph in the papers that the ship was insured—convey to her, by an unknown hand, the amount of the sum lost.—Why not ? The scheme seems practicable—it pleases me. Nothing is now wanting but expedition. [*He calls.*] Charles !

[*Sits at the table and writes.*]

SCENE X.

DORVAL, CHARLES.

DORVAL, *giving him a letter.*

Carry this to my banker at Paris.

END of the THIRD ACT.

ACT

ACT IV. SCENE I.

ROSELLA, JUSTINA.

JUSTINA.

WELL, madam—you had a mind to see Andrew.—Now you have seen him, what comfort has he brought? My old master is come, 'tis true, but the money is all gone.

ROSELLA, *wiping her eyes.*

'Tis in vain to strive against fate! My father lives, and if the loss of his fortune has not injured his health, the rest is of no consequence.

JUSTINA.

How! the loss of one's fortune of no consequence?

ROSELLA.

I know what poverty is. There are still greater misfortunes!

JUSTINA.

Don't deceive yourself, madam; there is not one of which we are so soon weary.

ROSELLA.

Were I possessed of unbounded wealth, should I be less wretched than I am? Happiness, Justina, is only to be found in an innocent and tranquil heart, such as I once could boast.

JUSTINA.

And Clairville was master of it.

ROSELLA, *sitting down weeping.*

Lover, once so dear! Clairville, whom I esteem, and whom I have overwhelmed with despair! O thou, from whom a less-deserving merit has stolen all my tenderness! take thy revenge.—Behold me weep, and feed thy resentment with my tears! What think'st thou, Justina, of this Dorval?—Beneath the mask of
the

THE TEST OF VIRTUE. 41

the affectionate friend, the man of honour, the most virtuous of all mortals, he is the basest of mankind ! a wretch who sports with the most sacred engagements of love, friendship, virtue, truth.—How I pity Constance ! He has deceived me ; she will probably fall into the same snare.—But I hear somebody *[rising.]* Justina, if it should be him——

J U S T I N A.

Madam, there is nobody.

R O S E L L A, *seating herself.*

How perfidious are these men !——Simple, credulous we, who believe them !——Examine their hearts, Justina, you will find truth and perjury associated together : the sublimest elevation of sentiments with the most abject degeneracy of conduct ! This Dorval, who hazards his life to save his friend's, is the same man who imposes on the credulity of Clairville and his sister ; who indulges a passion for me.——But why reproach him with the indulgence of a passion ? there I am equally guilty. His unparalleled treachery is all his own !

S C E N E II.

C O N S T A N C E, R O S E L L A.

R O S E L L A, *advancing to meet her.*

Ah, madam, in what a situation have you surprized me !

C O N S T A N C E.

I come to share your sorrows.

R O S E L L A.

May you ever be happy !

C O N S T A N C E.

[Seating herself, and obliging Rosella to sit by her, and taking her hand affectionately.]

Rosella, I only claim the privilege of a friend to mingle my tears with yours. 'Tis long that I have experienced

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rienced.

rienced the instability of human affairs ; you know I ever loved you with the tenderest affection.

ROSELLA.

Every thing is changed. One moment has destroyed all my expectations.

CONSTANCE.

I am still yours——and Clairville.

ROSELLA.

I cannot be too early in my removal from a family, where grief must make me a troublesome companion.

CONSTANCE.

My dear, take care. Adversity renders you unkind and unjust. 'Tis myself, not you, I ought to reproach. The favourite of fortune, I neglected to guard you against her frowns. Happy in my own change of situation, I was inattentive to the distress of others. I am severely punished for it : In yours it probes deep.—But your father——

ROSELLA.

I have already cost him many tears.—Madam, you may one day be a mother—how greatly shall I lament you !

CONSTANCE.

Rosella, I must entreat you to recollect the dying injunctions of your aunt : her last words confided to me the care of your happiness.—But we will waive all rights ; it is a testimony of esteem that I expect from you : therefore, think how much a refusal would disoblige me. Let us from this hour continue inseparable. You know the disposition of Dorval ; he has a regard for you. I will ask him to entreat my Rosella to accompany us to Paris. He will consent ; and this shall be the first and most grateful proof of his affection.

ROSELLA.

[Disengaging herself from Constance, and rising, with a look of indignation.]

Dorval !

CON-

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CONSTANCE.

He highly esteems you.

ROSELLA.

Is it possible ? a stranger !——scarcely known to us——the guest of a moment !——whose family was never heard of !——whose virtue, perhaps, is only hypocrisy !——Pardon me, madam, I had forgot——Undoubtedly you are perfectly satisfied in all these circumstances ?

CONSTANCE.

You are entitled to my pardon : Grief casts a shade on every object. Let me endeavour to cheer your mind with a ray of hope.

ROSELLA.

Flattered by Hope, she has deceived me. I have “ torn her anchor from my breast.”

[Constance *smiling compassionately*.

Alas ! had Constance lived alone, retired as formerly—possibly—yet that had been but a vain idea, which would have disappointed us both ! Softened with the appearance of a friend in distress, we enhance our self-esteem by sympathizing in their affliction. An involuntary transport of generosity impels us.—But time ! time !——Madam, the unhappy are proud, importunate ! distrustful ! are reconciled but by slow degrees to their fallen state. The world soon grows weary of complaints. Let us avoid the hazard of reciprocal reproaches. All, all is lost but friendship ; let me, at least, save that from the wreck ; I seem already to have learned something in the school of adversity.—Steadily supported with your advice, Rosella has never acted independantly. She has done nothing to give her consequence in her own eyes. Now is the time to put her fortitude to the test, instructed by Constance and misfortune. Do you envy her the sole advantage she has left, the knowledge of herself ?

CONSTANCE.

Rosella, this is enthusiasm ; beware of indulging it too far. The first effect of calamity is, to throw the

heart into violent agitation ; the last is, to break it. You, who are prepossessed that time would so entirely loosen the ties of friendship in me ; have you no doubt of your own uncertainty ?——Think, Rosella, that misfortune renders you sacred. Should I ever be deficient in respect for the unhappy, remind, upbraid me, make me blush ; the first time I have had occasion !—My dear girl, I know the world. I have known distress. This gives me some pretensions to judge of my own steadiness.—Yet I require no more of you than to rely equally upon my friendship, and your magnanimity.—To answer for your own consistency of behaviour, and suspect mine, is not this a little unreasonable ? But the idea of obligation and gratitude, these claim your delicacy. Well—only restore my brother that tenderness you once professed for him, and the obligation will be entirely on my side.

ROSELLA.

Madam, Dorval is here.—Allow me to retire.—my presence would be a very small addition to his exultation.
[Exit Rosella, enter Dorval.]

CONSTANCE.

Rosella—Dorval, don't let her go—But there is no preventing her.

SCENE III.

DORVAL, CONSTANCE.

DORVAL.

Madam, let us leave her to the satisfaction of mourning in secret.

CONSTANCE.

It is in your power to soften the severity of her fate. Dorval, the day that fixes my happiness may be the commencement of Rosella's.

DORVAL.

Madam, will you give me leave to speak to you ingenuously ? In trusting you with his most secret thoughts,
Dorval

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Dorval will endeavour to appear worthy of that distinction you honour him with, and merit, at least, your concern and regret.

CONSTANCE.

Dorval——But proceed.

DORVAL.

I will be open and unreserved.——I owe it to you——to your brother——to myself. You kindly interested yourself in the happiness of Dorval, but have you a thorough knowledge of his character? Some insignificant services, which an amiable youth has exaggerated; his own sensibility at my misfortunes; his transport at the shadow of some virtues he fancied he discerned; were circumstances that prepared, and established in your heart some favourable prepossessions which justice commands me to destroy. Clairville is a young man. Constance will form a different opinion from the portrait I shall delineate. [*Pausing.*] Heaven bestowed on me an upright heart, the only advantage it has hitherto granted me. But this heart is blasted by affliction, and I am, as you see, pensive and melancholy. I have virtue——but it is austere; manners, but they are savage;—a tender soul, but exasperated by a series of disappointments. I yet can shed tears, on uncommon occasions, but they are agonizing.——No, a man of this character is not the companion for Constance.

CONSTANCE.

Dorval, be not intimidated. When my heart yielded to the impression of your virtues, I beheld you such as you have painted yourself. I traced the lineaments of adversity, and its terrible effects. I pitied you, and perhaps my tenderness arose from that sentiment.

DORVAL.

Fortune has ceased to persecute you; her hand is still heavy on me.——Alas! I have ever been unfortunate! Abandoned almost from the moment of my existence, solitary in the midst of society. No sooner was I capable of distinguishing the social ties which connect us with each other, than I found those ties so broken

broken that not the least vestige remained. For thirty years, madam, I wandered among mankind, desolate, friendless, neglected! without seeking the friendship of any person, or meeting with any one who sought mine, when I saw your brother!—An irresistible attraction drew me towards him. In his bosom I poured forth all those sentiments of philanthropy, so long collected, so long restrained. Nor could I conceive an idea of sweeter felicity than in the moment I felt my heart relieved from the comfortless burthen of its own reflections.—How dear has that fleeting interval of happiness cost me! Alas, could I but enumerate—

C O N S T A N C E.

You have been unhappy; but all things have their period; and I am persuaded that your stars now prognosticate a revolution towards permanent happiness.

D O R V A L.

I have sufficiently proved the rigour of my destiny. Happiness will never be the lot of Dorval.—I am weary of society, and am sensible it must be only in banishment from those who are most dear to me, that I can hope for repose.—Madam, may heaven bestow on you those blessings it refuses me, and render Constance the happiest of her sex! Perhaps [*a little softened.*] the knowledge of your felicity in my retirement, may awaken me to a sense of joy.

C O N S T A N C E.

Dorval, you impose upon your understanding. Tranquility is only attainable from the approbation of our own hearts, and, perhaps, that of our fellow-creatures. The plan you have formed can never deserve the latter; nor have you any title to expect partiality from the former, if you desert the post to which heaven has appointed you. The superior talents it has endowed you with, render you responsible for their exertion. Let that swarm of insignificant mortals, those blanks in society, who are perpetually busied without having any pursuit, and are more an incumbrance than a benefit to the world, retire as soon as they please: but I will venture

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to affirm, you cannot withdraw from its duties without a crime. It must be the effort of a woman who loves your virtues, to restrain you ; the glory of Constance to preserve a support for oppressed merit ; a scourge for arrogant vice ; a brother to the good, a father to the unfortunate ! You, the friend of human kind, who have planned a thousand extensive, benevolent, beneficial schemes for its advantage ; schemes which require your unprejudiced reason, your fortitude of soul to execute ; you to renounce the world ! I appeal to your own heart ; that oracle will answer, “ The virtuous man “ reveres society ; the wicked only avoids it.”

D O R V A L.

But the severity of my fate pursues me ; it sheds its baleful influence over those I am connected with ; if heaven has decreed me a life of sorrow, has it likewise ordained that I must involve all my friends in it ? This was the abode of peace till I entered.

C O N S T A N C E.

Heaven does not always reveal its intentions to mortals. Though an intervening cloud sometimes obscures our prospect, a moment forms, a moment dissipates it : whilst the wise man keeps firm in his station, and patiently waits the termination of his infelicity.

D O R V A L.

Is there not reason to fear, that by remaining in the world he may multiply the objects of his attachment ? Constance, I am no stranger to that universally attractive passion which influences all beings to desire the perpetuity of their race. My heart has been sensible that the universe would ever be to me an immense desert, till I was blest with a companion to divide my pleasures and my pains.—In the intervals of melancholy I sought this fellow-mind !——

C O N S T A N C E.

And Providence has found it for you.

D O R-

DORVAL.

Too late for my repose ! It has treated with rigour a simple heart, that once might have been happy with the smallest portion of its blessings ; now become the slave of fear, terror, and of secret horrors !—Is it for Dorval to seek or communicate connubial happiness ? to be a parent—the author of a new race of beings—of children !—When I consider that we are plunged from our birth in a chaos of prejudice, extravagance, vice, and misery, the very thought makes me shudder !

CONSTANCE.

You are distressed with phantoms of the imagination ; nor am I surprized at it. The volume of life is so little understood, that of death so obscure, and the appearance of natural and moral evil so evident.—Yet Dorval, should you ever be a father, your children would not be entangled in that inextricable labyrinth you seem to dread. Their earlier years, informed and instructed by you, would establish a solid foundation for futurity. They would learn of you to think ; they would imbibe your passions, your taste, your sentiments. From you they would derive their just distinctions of greatness and meanness, of real happiness and apparent misery. Even their conscience would be regulated by *yours*. They would observe your conduct ; they would sometimes listen to a mother's advice. Dorval, the behaviour of your daughters will be modest and decent ; that of your sons noble and elevated : all your children will be amiable.

DORVAL.

If, unfortunately, Constance deceives herself.—If my children should resemble some I have seen, dishonest and infamous, I should die with grief.

CONSTANCE.

Such apprehensions are groundless, unless you can suppose the influence of virtue on the soul less efficacious and infallible than that of beauty on the senses. There
is

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is a natural love of order and decency implanted in the human soul, antecedent to any sentiment of reflection. From this source is derived the keenest sense of shame; this teaches us to dread contempt beyond even death itself. We are fond of imitation; and virtuous examples, I will venture to affirm, captivate us yet more strongly than vicious ones. — Ah, Dorval, what a variety of means has Providence pointed out to make men good!

DORVAL.

True, if we made a proper use of them. — But, in my opinion, granting that careful assiduity, seconded by a happy natural disposition, may guard them from vice; yet — will they be less miserable? How shall we divest them of those fears and prejudices which seize them at their entrance into life, and haunt them to the tomb? The folly and wretchedness of man terrifies me! Of how many monstrous opinions is he, by turns, the author and the victim! Ah! Constance, who can forbear trembling at the thought of augmenting that number of unhappy wretches, who may be compared to slaves fettered in a gloomy prison, “denying mutual aid, with cruel rage” they dash their galling chains against each other.”

CONSTANCE.

The evils of Superstition are not unknown to me. — But in these enlightened times, should that monster appear, as in ages of darkness, when the fury of its illusions sprinkled the earth with blood; when, invoking the assistance of heaven, it proceeded in crimes of the deepest die; bearing in one hand the sacred law of God, and with the other grasping a dagger to depopulate his creation! — paving the way to lasting shame and wretchedness; — believe me, Dorval, the world would now behold such scenes with astonishment and abhorrence! — There are, undoubtedly, some barbarians amongst us, and probably ever will be; but the *times of barbarism* are past. The understanding of mankind is more cultivated; Reason more unprejudiced; her precepts shine in modern writings; the public taste is entirely for such books as inculcate the principle of universal benevolence. Our theatres are schools of morality; exhibiting examples that cannot be too often repeated. The very philosopher you quoted, is principally indebted for his reputation to those sentiments of humanity inter-

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woven

woven in his pieces ; which penetrate the souls of his readers. No, Dorval, a nation that resorts to evening entertainments, to sympathize with virtue in distress, can never be wicked nor ferocious. It is Dorval, and men like Dorval whom the people honour, and whom the government ought peculiarly to patronize, that will free your children from those rigorous shackles which your melancholy destines for their innocent hands — How great satisfaction in the performance of our own duty ! in accustoming them to adore in the Author of nature the perfection of those virtues they love the faint resemblance of in his creature ! He will perpetually instruct them, that the law of humanity is immutable and indispensable ; and we shall observe with delight the germination of that principle of universal benevolence which comprehends all nature. — You have often told me that a humane mind never considers *the general system of intelligent beings*, without an ardent desire for their happiness — without participating of it in an extensive degree ! and I have not the most distant apprehension that the offspring of virtuous parents will ever be cruel and malevolent.

DORVAL.

The education and support of a family requires an ample fortune ; and I will not, Constance, conceal from you, that mine is reduced to the moiety of what it was.

CONSTANCE.

Real wants have limitations : those of fancy are unbounded. Let the wealth you may accumulate for your children, Dorval, be ever so enormous, if virtue is not included they will always be poor.

DORVAL.

Virtue ! the world makes a great parade of it !

CONSTANCE.

Perhaps no one thing in the universe is so thoroughly understood, or so highly revered. But, Dorval, we demonstrate our attachment much more strongly by the sacrifices we make to it, than by the admiration we express for its charms ! What an object of commiseration is that mortal who does not adore it preferably to all earthly blessings ! who does not exist entirely for its glory ! enchanted

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chanted within the circle of its attraction to the last breath of life !

D O R V A L.

[Remains a short time in silence and admiration.]

What a soul !——Adorable and cruel woman ! to what do you reduce me ? You tear from me the secret of my birth !——Know then, that in infancy I lost my mother. Young and unfortunate, too tender, too sensible of love ! she gave me being and died soon after. Her relations, irritated and powerful, obliged my father to retire to one of our colonies. There he heard of my mother's death, at a time when some favourable circumstances flattered him with the immediate hope of becoming her husband. Deprived for ever of that hope, he settled in the island ; but did not forget the child of affection bequeathed by a woman so dear to him. Constance, behold in me that child ! My father has made several voyages to France. I have seen him. I had expectations of seeing him once more. They are at an end. My birth is abject, in the opinion of the world, and my fortune is vanished like an exhalation.

C O N S T A N C E.

Birth is adventitious. Our virtues depend upon ourselves. As to riches, always embarrassing, and frequently destructive to our peace, heaven itself dictates the estimation we ought to hold them in, by spreading them indifferently upon the surface of the earth ; and bestowing them without distinction on the just and on the unjust. The wicked may boast of birth, titles, fortune, grandeur,——every thing except a virtuous heart and self-approving conscience. These are observations that a small degree of reason taught me to form, long before I knew your situation : all that now remains is only to fix the day of my happiness——of my glory.

D O R V A L.

Rosella is unhappy——Clairville in despair.——

C O N S T A N C E.

I blush at the reproach. Dorval, do you find out my brother. I will return to Rosella. Undoubtedly it should be our endeavour to reconcile two friends so worthy of being united. When we have succeeded, I will venture to hope all farther objections to our marriage are removed.

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S C E N E

SCENE IV.

DORVAL *solus*.

This is the woman to whom Rosella owes her education ! These are the principles she has inculcated.

SCENE V.

DORVAL, CLAIRVILLE.

CLAIRVILLE.

Dorval, what is to become of me ? What would you have me do ?

DORVAL.

Attach yourself more strongly than ever to Rosella.

CLAIRVILLE.

You advise me to it.

DORVAL.

I do.

CLAIRVILLE.

[*Embracing him*]

Ah ! my friend, you give me life. Twice in one day to be indebted to you for it !—I dreaded to hear your decree. O, I have suffered tortures since I left you ! Never before was I so sensible that, all tyrant as she is, I must adore her.—Despair seizes us ; we form violent resolutions : In a moment our anger subsides, and love keeps the field.

DORVAL, *smiling*.

All this I can easily believe. But the mediocrity of fortune—how are we to surmount that obstacle ?

CLAIRVILLE.

The extreme of misery is, in my opinion, to live without Rosella. I have considered the point, and my resolution is fixed. If we are impatient of the hardships of poverty, lovers, fathers, good citizens, may always find some method of improving their condition.

DORVAL.

What is your method !

CLAIR-

THE TEST OF VIRTUE. 53
CLAIRVILLE.

Commerce.

DORVAL.

Can a man of your rank have the courage to engage in it?

CLAIRVILLE.

What do you mean by courage? I can't see it requires any. A lofty soul like mine, inflexible to servile adulation, is unlikely to obtain from the favours of the great, a fortune that would make me easy. Wealth acquired by political cunning comes speedily, but is detestable; by arms, is glorious, but slow; by talents, always moderate, and of difficult attainment. There are some other rapid channels that lead to riches, but commerce is almost the only one where great wealth flows in proportion to the honest labour, industry, and hazards of the individual. I will be a merchant, Dorval; your knowledge of the world will, I hope, supply the experience I want in my new occupation.

DORVAL.

You think justly.—Your's, Clairville, is an unprecedented passion!—Employ all your rhetoric to move the compassion of Rosella, and you will have no occasion for commerce.—Grant that the ship her fortune was embarked in is taken by the enemy, it was insured, and the loss very inconsiderable; that circumstance is mentioned in the public papers, and I advise you to acquaint Rosella with it immediately.

CLAIRVILLE.

I am on the wing—

SCENE VI.

DORVAL, CHARLES, *in a riding dress*.

DORVAL, *walking apart*.

'Tis not in his power to render her less inexorable.—No,—But what if I attempt it?—An example of honour—of resolution.—A last effort upon my own heart—upon her's.

CHARLES.

DORVAL; OR,

CHARLES.

[Advancing, stops till his master perceives him.]

Sir, it is paid into Rosella's hand.

DORVAL.

I hear you.

CHARLES.

And here's a proof of it. *[Giving Rosella's receipt.]*

DORVAL.

'Tis very well.

[Exit Charles.]

SCENE VII.

DORVAL *solus.*

The sacrifice then is compleat. Fortune, *[repeats disdainfully.]* Fortune!—Love!—Liberty! Is it well judged to part with liberty?—O Reason, how irresistible is thy power, when thou borrowest the enchantingly melodious voice of woman! How inconsiderable, how limited a being is man! What folly to imagine his errors and misfortunes are of importance to the universe! that whatever affliction befalls him has, by an infinite chain of causes, been prepared from the beginning of time! that the destiny of her he loves is dependant on his will! Come and hear Constance speak, and confess the vanity of these thoughts.—Ah! could I collect in my own breast, the strength of argument, the superiority of understanding, with which that woman has at length subdued my soul, and established her empire there, I would talk with Rosella; she would be convinced, and Clairville would be happy.—But where is the improbability of my gaining the same ascendancy over her tender and flexible heart that Constance obtained over mine? Was the influence of virtue ever known to be debilitated?—I must see her, converse with her, and hope every thing from the rectitude of her character, and the sentiment that animates my own.

END of the FOURTH ACT.

ACT

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ACT V. SCENE I.

ROSELLA, JUSTINA.

[Rosella appears melancholy, walks and ruminates by fits, inattentive to Justina's discourse.]

JUSTINA.

HERE's your father escaped from I know not how many dangers! your fortune set to rights again! yourself at your own disposal, and yet nothing affects you. In good truth, madam, you very little deserve all these blessings to be so unthankful.

ROSELLA.

They are then to be united for ever!—Justina, have you been particular in your instructions to Andrew? Is he gone? When will he return?

JUSTINA.

Madam, what are you pursuing?

ROSELLA.

My will—No, my father shall never enter these fatal doors! I will not be a spectatress of their felicity.—I shall at least avoid professions of friendship which distract me!

SCENE II.

ROSELLA, JUSTINA, CLAIRVILLE.

CLAIRVILLE.

[He enters hastily, approaches and kneels to Rosella.]

Ah, cruel Rosella! take my life—kill me at once.—I am informed of your design.—Andrew has told me all. You are resolved to retire with your father. And from whom do you retire? From a man who idolizes you; who would have abandoned without regret his country, family, friends! hazarded a dangerous voyage to throw himself at the feet of your obdurate parent, either to obtain you or die. Then Rosella was tender, sensible, and faithful! shared all my sorrows.—Now she is the only cause of them.

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ROSELLA, *somewhat disconcerted.*

Andrew is a very imprudent man. I did not intend you should have known my design.

CLAIRVILLE.

You would then have deceived me?

ROSELLA, *with sharpness.*

I never deceive any one.

CLAIRVILLE.

Tell me then, why you are changed? To rob me of your heart is to condemn me to death. You wish me to die. You would rejoice, I am convinced of it.

ROSELLA.

No, Clairville. I most sincerely wish you happy.

CLAIRVILLE.

And yet you abandon me!

ROSELLA.

Why cannot you be happy without me?

CLAIRVILLE.

You pierce me to the heart.

[Still on his knees, his head sinking with excess of grief, After a short pause.]

You ought ever to have been constant! you swore to be so! Fool that I was to believe you!—Ah, Rosella! where is that faith given and received each day with new rapture? where are those oaths of fidelity? My heart, formed to retain an indelible impression of your beauty and your virtues, finds its sentiments of tenderness unimpaired; whilst yours are totally obliterated! What have I done to deserve this?

ROSELLA.

Nothing.

CLAIRVILLE.

Why then do those sweet moments no longer exist, when I read my own sentiments in your eyes? There was a time when these fair hands *[taking her hand.]* would have deigned to stop the tears, sometimes so bitter, often so delicious, that flowed from fear and tenderness!—Rosella, don't drive me to despair! have some regard to your own peace, if not to mine. You have no idea of the self-accusation

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culation of your own heart ! of its severe remonstrances.
—Oh, the inexhaustible source of regret, with which
you are preparing to sadden all your days !

ROSELLA.

Alas ! I have suffered too much already.

CLAIRVILLE.

My wrongs will impress in my absence a dreadful
image accompanied with trouble and anguish. The re-
membrance of your injustice will haunt you perpetually.

ROSELLA.

Clairville, forbear to terrify me. [*Looking stedfastly upon
him.*] What would you do ?

CLAIRVILLE.

Either soften you, or die.

ROSELLA, *after a pause.*

Do you believe Dorval to be your friend ?

CLAIRVILLE.

He knows my distress, and *shares* it.

ROSELLA.

He deceives you.

CLAIRVILLE.

I had fallen a victim to your rigour but for his counsel.
Without Dorval's friendship, Clairville had been no more;

ROSELLA.

I tell you he is a deceiver—a villain !

CLAIRVILLE.

Dorval a villain ! Can Rosella believe it ? Dorval and
Rosella are two sacred names enthroned in my heart ! To
attack them there is giving me a mortal wound. Dorval
a villain ! Rosella his accuser ! she !—There wanted
only this to sink me to the grave !

SCENE III.

ROSELLA, JUSTINA, CLAIRVILLE, DORVAL.

CLAIRVILLE.

Approach, my friend, come and hear that Rosella, once
so tender, now so cruel ! unreasonably upbraid you ; and

I

condemn

condemn to everlasting despair a man who would sooner die than give her the slightest cause of complaint.

[Concealing his tears, he walks to the upper end of the saloon, and throws himself upon a sofa, in all the agony of despair.]

D O R V A L, *pointing to Clairville.*

Madam, behold our work!—contemplate it well.—

Was this the return he had a right to expect from us? Shall a fatal despair be the bitter fruit of my friendship, and of your affection? Can we leave him to perish thus?

[Clairville rises and walks with distracted steps; Rosella follows him with her eyes; and Dorval, after meditating a little, continues to speak in a low voice without looking upon Rosella.]

Yet however violent his affliction, he may indulge it unrestrained! His honest heart need not dissemble it.—But we, ashamed of our unjustifiable sentiments, seek to hide them from the world! We fly to concealment.—Dorval and Rosella, contented with escaping the eye of observation, are perhaps vile enough secretly to applaud themselves for their dexterity.—Ah madam! *[Turning suddenly towards Rosella.]* were we created to endure such humiliation as this? Can we longer wish to drag on a life so abject? For me, I could not bear to live among mankind, were there throughout the vast extent of this habitable globe, one single spot where I deserved to be their scorn!—Escaped from shipwreck, I now hasten to your assistance; and will either land you safe on that fortunate shore where I first beheld you, or die in the attempt!

[He stops a moment, then proceeds.]

Tell me, Rosella, is virtue still estimable in your eyes? Is it still dear to you?

R O S E L L A.

More dear than life!

D O R V A L.

I will then point out to you the only method left of reconciling you to yourself; of becoming a valuable member of the community you are born in; the pupil and friend of Constance! the object of Clairville's tenderness and respect!

R O S E L L A.

Speak—I am all attention.

[Leaning on a chair, her head reclining on her hand, whilst he speaks.]

D O R-

D O R V A L.

Consider, madam, that the persecution of one tormenting reflection is alone sufficient to annihilate happiness: and that the consciousness of a dishonourable action is the most tormenting of all reflections. [*With quickness and rapidity.*] To admit vice into the breast is to establish it there; it becomes inseparably connected with shame and remorse, and never leaves the wretched sufferer one interval of ease. Suppose we were criminal enough to indulge a guilty passion, we must for ever avoid the eyes of those we have injured; the eyes of the two persons on earth whom we most revere! We must fly to some obscure corner, and bear the brand of guilt and shame upon our conscious brow! [*Rosella sighs.*] Far from Clairville, from Constance, where should we find comfort? What would become of us? Who would associate with us? Dreadful situation!——To be wicked is to condemn ourselves to be delighted with the conversation of vicious persons; to intermix with a crowd of wretches void of principles, manners, and character. A life of tumult and trouble gives the lie to all their asseverations of joy and satisfaction. Blushing, they praise the virtue they have abandoned, and hear the general voice condemn their actions. They fly for consolation to air-blown systems of infidelity; bubbles, which the breath of a good man instantly disperses. For ever debarred from the source of true pleasures, such as are decent, serious, and sublime, they become immersed in vain and frivolous amusements, that murder time; whilst the fleeting moments pass away unperceived, till the last hour reminds them of its loss.——Believe me, Rosella, I do not exaggerate. When the clue of the labyrinth is once lost, we wander indiscriminately through the paths of error, regardless whither they lead. You are already alarmed! yet this is but part of the impending danger. Rosella, you have been on the brink of losing the most invaluable earthly blessing a woman can possess: A blessing your sex ought incessantly to petition heaven to grant, the rarest of its gifts! a virtuous husband! That day, the most solemn of your life, whose recollection should ever be attended with the most delightful sensations, would have been stigmatized with an act of injustice that would stain your cheek with a guilty blush at its remembrance. Reflect that the mourn-

ful image of Clairville, betrayed and despairing, must have been your inseparable attendant to the foot of the sacred altar, where our vows had been interchanged. Your fancy would have represented the severely-reproachful eyes of Constance rivetted upon you. Those had been the tremendous witnesses of our nuptials!—and these words so sweet to hear, so sweet to pronounce, when they insure and compleat the felicity of two lovers whose desires are consecrated by innocence and virtue; those words, fatal to us, had been the eternal seal of our misery and iniquity.—Yes, madam, of our iniquity. The deception is over, and objects appear in their real colours. When once we are despicable in our own eyes, self-reproach succeeds, and misery begins. [*Rosella strives to conceal some involuntary tears.* Who, to speak sincerely, can repose any confidence in the woman who betrays her lover? or rely on the honour of the man who deceives his friend?—Madam, whoever engages in the indissoluble ties of marriage will expect to regard in his wife, the woman of superior excellence! and, in spite of all her endeavours, Rosella must have considered me, in the character of *her husband*, as the most abject of mankind! These are things not to be submitted to.—I cannot too much respect the mother of my children; nor can I be, in her eyes, too respectable! Your blushes; your downcast looks, what do they indicate? Can you be offended there is in nature something which has a claim to my admiration superior to yourself? Do you wish to see me again exposed to those cruel, those humiliating reflections when undoubtedly you contemned me?—when I abhorred myself; when I dreaded to behold you! when you trembled to hear my voice! and when our souls, floating between vice and virtue, were almost irrecoverably lost!—Alas! madam, how unhappy have we been! But my unhappiness ceased, the moment I resolved to be equitable. I have gained the hardest, but at the same time the completest victory over my own heart. I am again myself. Rosella is no longer invincible! and I can, fearless of danger, confess all the disorder her charms had wrought in my soul; when tost by the wildest tempest of passion and sentiment that ever mortal experienced, I returned.—But an unexpected event—the mistake of Constance—your own—the efforts I made—have broke my chain.—I am free!

Rosella

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[Rosella appears sunk in grief; Dorval perceiving it turns towards her, and regarding her with a more gentle air, proceeds.

But what have I succeeded in that Rosella cannot execute with infinitely greater facility? Her heart is formed to feel, her understanding to dictate, her mouth to utter the precepts of virtue! A moment's deliberation, and I had heard from Rosella the remonstrances she has deigned to listen to from me!—I should then have considered her as some beneficent divinity extending her supporting hand to aid my sinking steps.

ROSELLA, in a faltering voice.

Dorval—

DORVAL, with mildness.

Rosella—

ROSELLA.

How ought I to act?

DORVAL.

We have rated self-applause at an inestimable price!

ROSELLA.

Do you wish to see me a prey to despair?

DORVAL.

No.—There are situations where a vigorous effort is alone wanted to subdue it!

ROSELLA.

I understand you.—You are my friend.—My resolution strengthens.—I am impatient to see Constance—I can now discern the path that leads to happiness!—

DORVAL.

Ah, Rosella! I acknowledge your form! It is you, but more fair, more affectingly beautiful than ever! I now behold you worthy of the friendship of Constance, the tender affection of Clairville, and the esteem, for I now dare name him, of Dorval!

SCENE

SCENE VI.

ROSELLA, JUSTINA, DORVAL, CONSTANCE.

ROSELLA, *running to meet her.*

Come, Constance, receive from your pupil's hand the only mortal who deserves you.—

CONSTANCE.

And you, madam, hasten to embrace a father.—
He is here.—

SCENE V.

ROSELLA, CONSTANCE, JUSTINA, DORVAL. *The aged
LYSIMOND supported by CLAIRVILLE and ANDREW.
CHARLES, SYLVESTER, and the rest of the Servants.*

ROSELLA.

My father!

DORVAL.

What do I see! Lysimond! my father! Oh heavens!

LYSIMOND.

Yes, my son, it is indeed your father! Come hither, my children. [*To Dorval and Rosella.*] Let me embrace you. Ah, my son! my daughter! [*Looking at them attentively.* At last 'tis given me once more to behold you![*Observing their astonishment, he presents them to each other.* My son, receive a sister from my hand. My daughter, Dorval is your brother.

ROSELLA.

Dorval, my brother!

DORVAL.

My sister!

[*Repeating these appellations at the same instant with rapidity and surprize.*LYSIMOND, *sitting down.*Yes, my children, I will tell you all.—Approach, that I may once again embrace you. [*With uplifted hands.*] May that Power who has restored us to each other, bless you both! Clairville—and you, madam [*Addressing himself to Clairville and Constance.*] will pardon the transports of
a fa-

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a father, who finds his long-divided children.—I thought them lost to me for ever.—A thousand times I repeated, Never shall I see them more.—“Never again will they behold their father.—Alas ! perhaps they will ever be ignorant of the affinity between them !” When I undertook this voyage [*Turning to Rosella.*] my darling hope was to introduce thee to a son, worthy of mine, worthy of all thy affection ! who will support thy tender youth when I am gone—and, my child, that time cannot be very remote.—But why are the countenances of my children yet unenlivened with those rapturous expressions of joy I flattered my fond heart with inspiring ? Bending beneath the weight of old age and infirmities, my approaching dissolution afflicts you.—Ah, Dorval ! Rosella ! I have endured such hardships, suffered such distresses !

[Grasping them in his arms, regarding them with looks of tenderness, expressive of his desire that they should acknowledge each other. They salute affectionately, and falling at their father's feet, embrace his knees, exclaiming,

DORVAL and ROSELLA.

O, my father !

LYSIMOND.

Laying his hand on their heads, in a supplicating manner.

O God, I thank thee ! My children, acknowledge the ties of consanguinity ; their affection will be reciprocal ! In that hope I die contented.—Clairville, you have loved Rosella.—Rosella, Clairville is dear to you ;—love him always. Come near, that I may join your hands.

[Clairville, without daring to advance, presents his hand to Rosella with passionate emotion. Rosella, touched with his distress, advances towards her father. Clairville suddenly throws himself at his feet. Lysimond unites them.

ROSELLA.

My father ?

LYSIMOND,

What says my child ?

ROSELLA.

Constance and Dorval—are worthy of each other.

LYSI-

I understand thee.—Approach, my dear children,—
 approach.—Bestow on me a double portion of happiness!

[*Constance and Dorval advance with composure to Lysimond. The good old man takes the hand of Constance, kisses it, and presents to her his son's, which she receives. Shedding tears of ecstasy, Lysimond proceeds.*

These are tears of joy—and these shall be the last.—
 I leave you an ample fortune: enjoy it as irreproachably
 as it has been acquired.—My wealth has not cost my in-
 tegrity a pang. You may possess it, my children, without
 remorse.—Rosella, your eyes are fixed upon your bro-
 ther, and then, bathed in tears, you turn them upon me.
 —My child, you shall be informed of every circum-
 stance; I again repeat it.—Spare thy father an imme-
 diate confession, in the presence of a brother, sensible and
 delicate.—Heaven, whose mysterious will dashed my
 cup of life with bitterness, has reserved these cordial drops
 pure and unmixed, to sweeten its last dregs. My dear
 Rosella, permit me to enjoy them.—Every thing is dis-
 posed of between you.—Here, my daughter, is the esti-
 mate of my effects.

ROSELLA.

Ah, sir!—

LYSIMOND.

Take it, my child.—I have run out my glass. It is
 time for you to live, and for me to retire. To-morrow,
 if heaven so decrees; I shall obey without regret. My
 son, here is the exact copy of my will—I know you will re-
 spect it.—Above all, do not forget Andrew. To him I am
 indebted for the satisfaction of dying with my children.—
 Rosella, I will again remind thee of Andrew, when thy
 hand is performing the last sad office.—You see, my
 children, I have consulted only parental affection; you are
 equally dear to me.—The loss I met with was a trifle:
 you will bear it together without much inconvenience.

ROSELLA.

What do I hear?—Sir, these bills were delivered to
 me—

[*Presenting the pocket-book sent by Dorval.*

LYSI-

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LYSIMOND.

These bills——let me examine them.

[Opens the pocket-book, and examines the contents.]

Dorval, you alone can explain this riddle. These notes are yours——speak——let us know how they came to be in your sister's possession?

CLAIRVILLE, *impetuously.*

I comprehend it all!——He exposed his life.——He sacrificed to me his fortune!

ROSELLA to Clairville.

His love!

CONSTANCE to Clairville.

His freedom!

CLAIRVILLE.

Oh, my friend!

[Embracing Dorval.]

ROSELLA.

[Throwing herself with downcast looks into her brother's arms.]

My brother!

DORVAL *smiling.*

I was a mad man. You were but a child.

LYSIMOND.

My son, what does all this mean? you must have given this company some extraordinary subject for joy and admiration, that your father does not comprehend, and therefore is unable to partake.

DORVAL.

Father, the pleasure of seeing you restored to us, has transported us even to ecstasy!

LYSIMOND.

May the Almighty, who blesses parents and children by a reciprocation of benefits and affection, grant that your offspring may repay the tenderness and filial duty you feel for me.

T H E C O N C L U S I O N .

I Promised to explain why I was not present at the last scene of the comedy. The reason was this. Lyfimon being dead, one of his friends resembling him in years, stature, voice, and in his silver locks, had engaged to represent him.

This old man entered the saloon, as Lyfimon had formerly done, supported by Clairville and Andrew; but scarcely did he make his appearance than this incident renewed the idea of a beloved and respectable parent so powerfully, that the whole family burst into tears. The old man himself could not refrain from weeping. The contagion spread among the domesticks, and the play broke off unfinished.

When every one was retired, I quitted my concealment, and returned in the same manner I had entered. As I walked along, I dried my eyes, and said, by way of consolation, for I was deeply affected, "I certainly must be of a very tender disposition to afflict myself thus for what is merely a work of imagination? Dorval invented the plot; the dialogue is entirely his own, and the family had a mind to amuse themselves with the representation!" Some circumstances, nevertheless, appeared not easily reconcilable. Dorval's adventures were no secret in the neighbourhood; the representation had been so lively, that in several parts, forgetting I was only an ignorant spectator, I had been on the point of leaving my covert and adding a new personage to the drama. I found it impossible to extricate my thoughts from several other perplexities. For if this comedy was mere fiction, why was the last scene omitted? or how could I account for that extreme grief with which the actors seemed penetrated at the sight of the old man who represented Lyfimon?

Some days after I went to return Dorval thanks for that delightfully-affecting evening, for which I was indebted to his complaisance. "The play meets with your approbation!" I love to speak truth; my friend loved as well to hear it. I answered therefore, that the play had been so inimitably performed, the deception had worked so powerfully on my imagination, it was impossible for me to determine the merit of the work. Besides, the interruption of the last scene left me entirely ignorant of the catastrophe: but if he would favour me with a perusal of the manuscript, I would frankly deliver my sentiments.

"Your sentiments! and have not you informed me already of all I wished to know? A play is wrote less for the closet than the stage. This pleases you in the representation, there wants no more. Read it, however, and we will talk farther upon the subject."



